

Mr. LISTER. If the charge made in this resolution had happened one hundred years ago, the individual would have been confined in the Tower by the unanimous consent of both sides of Parliament; while in this progressive age, in this age of great honesty, very little is said about the returning officer, and the contest is reduced to one between two candidates who ran at that election. The conduct of the returning officer was a most scandalous outrage on the rights of the electors of Queen's, and the Minister of Justice and his colleagues in the Government are guilty, as accessories to that crime, by moving the amendment which the Minister has moved to-night. The Secretary of State smiles. I would expect nothing else from him. It must have been gratifying to every gentleman to see the hon. member for North Essex (Mr. Patterson), strong supporter as he is of the Government of the day, have the manliness and independence to rise and denounce the efforts of the Government to put a man in a seat in this House who obtained a minority of the votes of the electors of Queen's, N.B. A more dishonorable act it would be difficult to conceive—a more disgraceful act on the part of any man, than to seek to usurp the rights of another and deprive the people of the county of Queen's of their rights, I have never had brought before me since I have been a member of Parliament or otherwise. The speeches of the hon. member for Pictou (Mr. Tupper) and the hon. member for Kent (Mr. Landry) were the speeches of special pleaders. The latter gentleman was badly briefed; his brief was an imperfect one, inasmuch as he possessed himself neither of the facts nor the law. The speech of the hon. member for Pictou was something better, but it was a special plea and nothing more. And as far as the speech of the Minister of Justice is concerned, what shall I call it? What ought we to expect from him—the man who appoints the judiciary, the man who, to a certain extent, administers the legal affairs of this country—what shall we say of him being a party to an act so scandalous as this? Sir, we know—

Mr. SPEAKER. Order. I do not think the hon. gentleman's expressions are parliamentary.

Mr. MITCHELL. What is the matter with them? There is nothing wrong with them.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order, order.

Mr. MITCHELL. I am in order. I rise to ask what is wrong with them. I see nothing wrong with the expressions.

Mr. SPEAKER. I say that it is unparliamentary to say that an hon. member of this House—a Minister of the Crown—has been a party to a scandalous or dishonest act.

Mr. MITCHELL. It is so, whether it is in order or not.

Mr. LISTER. I say it is a scandalous act to put a minority candidate in this House. We have had enough election committees. We know what they are. I have had the honor of being a member of this House only four short years, and yet in that short time I have had some experience on election committees. I have seen your so-called election committee unseat an hon. member behind me, who had the majority of votes in a county in Prince Edward Island, and put the man who had the minority of votes in his place in this House, and he held that seat for four long years. The people of Prince Edward Island, when they had the opportunity, told you what they thought of such conduct as that. To tell us that the members of this Committee on Privileges and Elections are going to look at this matter as a judicial body, is to tell us something that our experience teaches us we cannot believe. Sir, the members of the committee have nothing in this case to decide; and, speaking about my hon. friend from Prince Edward Island, while the members of that committee reported to this House that he ought to be unseated and the other man take his

Mr. SUTHERLAND.

place, the Chief Justice who has the appointment of the sheriff of the county, who was the returning officer—while this House said that that returning officer had acted rightly—the Chief Justice of Prince Edward Island declared that he had acted scandalously, shamelessly and shamefully. This is the legal result, the legal offspring, of the legislation you brought into the House within the last few years. You repealed the Act that Mr. Mackenzie passed providing that public officials should be returning officers. Why did you do so? Shall I say why? It was because you could not manipulate the public officers, and you appointed your own partisan returning officers from one end of the country to the other—men who would do your dirty work, and they have done it nobly. Here, Sir, a partisan of the most partisan character, the secretary of the Conservative Association of that county, is appointed the returning officer of that county, and he does his work well; he does his work clean. He puts in the minority candidate, and you are bound to keep him here. If you were not, you would resent this insult to the dignity of this House, this invasion of popular rights, because every county in Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific is interested in this case. If a man violates the law in one case, it will be violated again, and the House owes it to itself to condemn in unmistakable language the conduct of that man. The Minister of Justice gets up here and admits that Mr. King had the majority of votes; he pleads for the man who has wronged Mr. King—for the man who has usurped his place. Sir, if Mr. King has been wronged, why perpetuate and intensify that wrong by throwing the case before the Privileges and Elections Committee? Why not deal with it at once, as the hon. member for North Essex (Mr. Patterson) has said, and decide it here, because we can decide it at once, for the simple reason that there is no more evidence to be produced before the committee than we have before us to-day, and that evidence shows that Mr. King has been elected by a majority of sixty-one votes. The people of Queen's have decided who shall be their member, and you, in defiance of the popular wish, say that somebody else shall be the member, and not the man the people elected. If it goes before the Committee on Privileges and Elections, when will it get out and what report will they make? I venture to say that if it goes before that committee it will result in seating, in keeping in his seat the man who has received the minority of votes. We will see the case go before that committee. The Government has decided that it must go there, and I suppose there are not sufficient hon. gentlemen on the other side to take an independent stand in the matter, although I know there are a number of them who feel that a great wrong is being done. I fear, Sir, that party fealty, that feeling that they have—that many of us have too much of perhaps—that feeling of fealty and allegiance to the party will force them to do what they know is abhorrent to their better feelings. There is no man sitting here to-night but must feel that the electors of the county of Queen's having decided that Mr. King shall be the member; there is no honorable man here to-night who does not feel in his heart of hearts that we are committing a wrong in keeping him out of the seat to which he was legally elected. I know that it will be doing violence to their feelings to allow the minority candidate to take a seat in the House. It is amazing—it must be amazing to every honorable man—how an hon. gentleman occupying the position he does, would not at the first opportunity say: No, the people of Queen's have not elected me, and I will never degrade myself by taking that seat. What is there to be decided? A paltry contemptible quibble—it is nothing more or less—that the two hundred dollars was not paid by the agent to the returning officer. Now, Sir, if the returning officer was a judicial officer—and I admit that he had quasi-judicial